



# KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CENTER FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH

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KANSAS MUSEUM OF HISTORY

6425 South West Sixth ▪ Topeka, Kansas 66615-1099 ▪ 913/272-8681

## Certification of State Register Listing

The Register of Historic Kansas Places includes all Kansas properties nominated to the National Register as well as lower threshold properties which are listed on the state register only.

Property Name: Pactola Apartments

Address: 15-19 North Poplar, Hutchinson, Reno County, Kansas 67501

Owner: Del and Virginia Fessler

Address: 15-19 North Poplar, Hutchinson, Kansas 67501

National Register eligible \_\_\_\_\_

State Register eligible ✓

This property was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review for the Register of Historic Kansas Places on December 2, 1989.

I hereby certify that this property is listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places.

Ramon Powers  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Dec 14, 1989  
Date

12/89



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Pactola Apartments  
other names/site number J. B. Brown Home

**2. Location**

street & number 15-19 North Poplar ☐ not for publication  
city, town Hutchinson ☐ vicinity  
state Kansas code KS county Reno code 155 zip code 67501

**3. Classification**

## Ownership of Property

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

## Category of Property

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

## Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously  
listed in the National Register 0

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  
☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the  
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.  
☐ determined eligible for the National  
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.  
☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.  
☐ removed from the National Register.  
☐ other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: multiple dwelling**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: ItalianateLATE 19th & 20th CENTURY REVIVALS:Classic Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls brickroof asphaltother concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Pactola Apartments (1880, 1924, 1927) are located in the central business district of Hutchinson, Reno County, Kansas (pop. 42,000) at the intersection of North Poplar and East First Avenue on the east ten feet of lot 35 and all of lots 37, 39 and 41 East First, Original Townsite.

The Pactola consists of the original Italianate residence built in 1880, and two additions built in 1921 and 1927. The original residence is a two story, Cross Plan, red brick, low hipped roofed structure with a veranda porch, hooded windows, and ornate cast block quoins. The additions are three stories in height with a full basement. They are rectangular structures with red brick walls, flat roofs with parapets, and Classical Revival style details.

## Original Residence

The original residence measures approximately 50 feet from north to south and 20 feet from east to west with a 10 foot wing on each side. The building has been in continual residential use since it was built and retains a high degree of architectural integrity. A 1921 remodeling of the residence into apartments by noted Kansas architect, W.E. Hulse, was accomplished with great sensitivity to the buildings interior features.

The buildings foundation is cut limestone. The exterior walls are composed of soft red brick, made in early Hutchinson, that has been painted. Locally produced ornate cast concrete quoins are found at the intersections of the exterior walls. Cast concrete hoods top the segmentally arched tall, narrow 1/1 windows with concrete sills. Symmetrical wings extend on the east and west elevations with a low hip roof on each. The low hipped roof is sheathed in composition roofing. Two, plain, exterior chimneys remain. Three light, gabled dormers are centrally located on the north facade and south elevation. The original wrought iron cresting is found on all elevations. Large, paired, eave brackets dominate the cornice lines and are placed on a deep, molded trim band.

A veranda porch wraps the north facade and fills the corner of the east elevation. The veranda exhibits a low shed roof with wrought iron cresting and brackets that are simpler than the main roof brackets but echo those elements. The roof is supported by brick pillars on cut limestone posts with limestone cap and base, and has wood rails. The entry to the veranda is at the west end of the north facade where four cut limestone steps are located. The main entrance to the building is on the north facade and exhibits the original doors, ornate, double, wood panel with two lights. A floral design is etched in the top lights.

☒ See continuation sheet

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A large bay window projects on the east elevation wing that is topped by a shed roof and cresting. Entrances are found at either end of the wing on the first floor. The doors are fifteen light wood with transoms. A porch identical to the front veranda fills the south corner of this elevation and has two entrys, one to the bay and one to the main structure. The doors are fifteen light wood panel with transoms. Paired windows are above the bay on the second story of the wing which is squared with single windows at each end.

On the west facade is a circular, red glass window at the staircase level. A single entry with a twelve light wood panel door leads to a concrete slab patio surrounded by wood lattice rails. There is a single story projecting wing at the south end of the elevation. A brick blocked door is found between the wings. A limestone wall and garden fills the corner at the front of the residence.

The south elevation has been submerged in a link between the original residence and the 1921 addition. A second story open porch has been enclosed.

The interior of the original residence was sensitively divided into two apartments in 1921. There is a one bedroom and a two bedroom apartment on the first floor. There are two studio and two, two bedroom apartments on the second floor. The largest apartment on the first floor is currently utilized as an office. On the first floor, original woodwork, radiators, windows, wainscoting and a marble fireplace remain intact. Several original nine foot panel doors remain. The original staircase is retained. The interior remodeling paid close attention to detail and included many built-ins. The second story apartments have retained the original windows, radiators, and tile bathroom.

**1921 Addition**

The 1921 addition is a rectangular, hard fired red brick, three story, Classical Revival style building with a full basement and a cast in place concrete foundation. It is linked to the original residence through a classical entry. The entry has a plate glass and metal door with single light sidelights and a semi-elliptical arched 8 light transom with embedded Doric columns. The entablature reads "Pactola Apartments." The roof is a low shed with pedestals at each end. A scrolled concrete element is found on the southernmost pedestal.

The building has a flat roof with a plain parapet on the north and south elevations and a stepped parapet on the east elevation. Horizontal projecting concrete belt courses are found on the north facade and east elevation and vertical, projecting concrete belt courses are found on the east elevation. The windows are wood frame, double hung, 6/1 and 1/1 with concrete sills set singly and in pairs. Ornate concrete planters are placed beneath the window sills in two locations on the first floor. There are three 3 light metal casement basement windows on the east elevation.



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The rear, south elevation displays asymmetrical 3/1 windows on three levels with 3/1 windows in submerged basement window wells. The central entry is wood frame with a wood door and a metal storm door with a projecting canopy and wrought iron rail.

The interior is divided into two one bedroom apartments on each of the three levels with one apartment in the basement. The building has a marble tile floor and interior surround at the linking entry. Just inside the entry is a built-in marble table with original brass mailboxes above. Corridors extends from north to south with a staircase at either end on all three levels. A corridor joining the 1927 addition runs east and west at the south end of the building. The staircase at the north end has a painted oak balustrade. The staircase at the south end is cast in place concrete with a rough painted stucco finish. A trash removal system is found at this staircase, allowing residents to dump trash down a chute to the basement. All floors and staircases are concrete.

The apartments display their original features including many built-ins, pass throughs for deliveries, original fixtures in the baths and kitchens. One apartment with a large fireplace and cedar lined closet is located in the basement along with laundry facilities, a workshop and a boiler room. Some of the apartments originally had built-in beds.

**1927 Addition**

The 1927 addition is a rectangular, three story, Classical Revival style building with a full basement and a cast in place concrete foundation. It is linked to the 1921 addition by a corridor. Ceilings are lower in this addition and though the second story corridor is level with the second story of the 1921 addition, the first and third story corridors have been slanted to adjust the design to the lowered ceilings. Dark red hard fired bricks are found on the the north facade and the northern portion of the west elevation. Common red brick painted are found on the southern portion of the west elevation and on the south elevation. The roof is flat with a plain parapet on the south and west elevations. Two symmetrical implied pediment forms with diamond shaped brick inserts are located on the north facade. A vertical bond belted brick element is found at the cornice.

The north facade is almost symmetrical with a two story portico having large Doric columns. The portico has balustraded roof decks and railed divided porches at the second and third story. A raised slab concrete patio is centrally located between the columns at the first level. Eight light french doors give access to the porches from each apartment. There are 6/6 symmetrical double hung wood frame windows on this elevation.





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The west elevation is L shaped and displays asymmetrically located paired small 4/4 wood double hung, single 2/2 wood double hung, and 6/6 wood double hung windows. Three metal door give access to a metal fire escape on the upper levels. A metal door gives access to a four step concrete stoop at the first level. A brick wall composed of common brick and hollow 12" x 6" scored red brick extends over a portion of the property line.

The south elevation displays a three story poured concrete porch infilled with hollow 12" x 6" scored red bricks that are labeled "Metgo-Lusco" and are painted. Symmetrically located 2/2 horizontal double hung wood frame windows are found on the porches. Windows on this elevation are triple paired narrow 4/4 wood double hung and triple paired narrow 2/2 double hung at the upper three stories. The basement displays three light fixed wood windows and double wood doors at the bottom of a steep cast in place driveway give access to the basement. Several original wood canopies remain over the windows on this elevation.

The interior is divided into twelve apartments. The six that are located on the rear south facing elevation originally were studio apartments with a built-in bed in the living room and a small sleeping porch. The living room beds have been removed and the sleeping porches are now used as bedrooms. The six apartments that are located on the north facade are studio apartments although the built-in beds have been removed. Original elements found on the interior of this addition include scored plaster detailing and wrought iron grill pass throughs in the hallways. The original light fixtures have been replaced with similar fixtures. The entries to the apartments are arched with arched panel doors that have been infilled with plywood to meet fire code. The apartment spaces have not been modified and were carefully designed to maximize utilization of space. Kitchen, dressing room and bathroom built-ins abound.



## 8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning & Development

Period of Significance

1921 - 1933

Significant Dates

c. 1921, 1927

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Hulse, William Earl

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Pactola Apartments (c.1880, 1921, 1927) is being nominated to the National Register under criteria A for its historical association with community planning and development that occurred during the twentieth century boom period in Hutchinson during the period from 1910 to 1930.

The Pactola Apartments include the original Italianate style residence and two Classic Revival later additions. The home, a mansion, was built in 1880 by businessman, real estate magnate John B. Brown. After his death in 1898 the home was sold to stockman Robert E. Steele who moved his family from the Crooked L Ranch in Meade County to Hutchinson. Prominent architect, William Earl Hulse, purchased the residence in 1920 and remodeled the interior into three elegant apartments. In 1921 and 1927, Hulse designed and built apartment additions to the rear of the original home.

When Hulse purchased the Brown Home in 1921, the City of Hutchinson was in the middle of a spectacular boom period. The population had almost doubled in the decade between 1910 and 1920 and would increase by another 5,000 by 1930. The community was the fifth largest in the state. After oil was discovered in 1924, a surge of building occurred that increased building permit activity by 269% in 1927.

The development of elite subdivisions to the north of the central business district gave impetus to the exodus of the upper middleclass from their older styled, large mansions in the inner city. The area around the Brown Home had changed dramatically from residential mansions to business related and social service uses during the decade between 1910 and 1920. The Wiley Building, an eight story skyscraper, was built just two blocks west in 1912. The interurban that served Wichita, Hutchinson and Newton ran at the west end of the block. The Methodist Church had built a large building at that end of the block, just across the street the new YMCA had been constructed. The south side of the block had become two story commercial auto related buildings and a large three story addition was built just across the alley on the old Bachelor's Roost, a mansion that housed young men, which was now an undertaking parlor. The Parkway Hotel had been built directly across the street to the north. In response to the area's change, Hulse, who was at the peak of his very successful career, immediately began planning to develop the property into exclusive downtown apartments.

☒ See continuation sheet

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1904, 1909, 1915,

December 10, 1923,  
3, 1967, March 23,

sas, 1893.

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Planning Department

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665-2635

zip code 67504-1567

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In 1921 Hulse divided the original residence into two elegant and well appointed apartments on the first floor and four modest apartments on the second floor. Hulse was sensitive to the original interior of the residence and one can imagine that he took great pride in designing the many built-ins and details included in created the new apartments. A half-bath was crafted under the original staircase. New kitchen, bath, and closet cupboards were designed to add to the function of the small apartments. The exterior of the home remained intact except for the porch which was extended to wrap the northeast corner and join the porch on the east. New cut stone posts with brick pillars and stone caps replaced the original ornate wooden posts and arched brackets and wood railings were added.

In conjunction with the remodeling, Hulse designed and built a seven apartment Classical Revival style addition which was linked to the residence by a formal entry. The addition was completed by 1921 and contains a number of convenient details including pass-throughs from the hall to the individual kitchens and a marble entry that indicate the attempt to make these apartments uncommonly attractive to downtown renters.

In 1927, he designed and built a second Classical Revival style addition that was linked by a hallway with the earlier addition. In this addition he added a formal portico and two story Doric columns. Again, the interior appointments were meticulous, with great care taken to provide a wide array of built-ins.

The apartment conversion was apparently successful. The July 4, 1930 edition of the Hutchinson News included a drawing of the complex that features the 1927 addition and is labeled "Pactola Apartments, A Down Town Beauty Spot."

The first residents in the complex after the apartment conversion and first addition were completed were upward trending professional persons including, an attorney; a flower shop owner (the shop was successful, continuing until the 1980s); a railroad engineer who would later become Hutchinson's post master; a physician's associate; and a partner in an expanding and successful meat packing company that would be sold to Safeway in 1947.

This trend toward professional tenants continued into the depression years of the 1930s. In 1933 several years after the second addition had been in use, the residents included the owner of a Dairy, an assistant manager at Morton Salt, and the president of a grocery company. Four of the twenty apartments were vacant, perhaps a reflection of the times. The boom was over and the depression was at its worst during the early 1930s in Hutchinson. One resident of the Pactola, V.E. McArthur, owner of McArthur Meat Packing Company, offered the city 15,000 pounds of food for use in relief efforts in exchange for the use of the city scales in 1932.



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The depression also affected the Hulse family. The Reno County Courthouse which was built in 1931 was his last courthouse commission in Kansas. By 1933 Hulse, who was 53 at the time, had given up his architectural office in the Stamey Hotel and his home at 1011 North Main. He and his second wife, Christie, were reduced to living in the Pactola. He resided in the apartment complex until his death in 1943. Christie continued to reside in and manage the apartments until her death in 1962.

The apartments have been sold several times since the early 1960s and have continued in use as elegant small apartments in the downtown area. New owners, Del and Virginia Fesler, are deeply concerned with preserving this important landmark.

Hulse was born in Columbia, Ohio on August 11, 1882. As a young man, he studied Civil Engineering at the University of Missouri from 1898 until 1901. In the decade before establishing himself as a private architect, Hulse worked as a civil engineer for the Holly and Swink Railway and the Santa Fe Liberal and Englewood Railway, probably designing depots and other railroad related structures. Hulse apparently arrived in Hutchinson from Iowa in 1910, as a prominent young architect. He was the President of the W.E. Hulse Co., Architects and Engineering Investment Company. In addition to his Hutchinson office, Hulse also maintained offices in Sioux City and Des Moines, Iowa.

Hulse specialized in public and commercial buildings. His firm designed three schools in Hutchinson and at least three more in Reno County. His portfolio included eight Kansas County courthouses and other public and commercial buildings in midwestern states. His commercial designs included the Hutchinson News-Herald Building, the Lewis Building in Topeka, Kansas which was built for the Chamber of Commerce and a hotel in Lawrence, Kansas. His designs were most frequently expressions of the Neo-Classical Revival style. The Reno County Courthouse is the only known example of Art Deco style architecture attributed to Hulse.

Two local examples of Hulse's personal architecture exist. In 1923 he designed the Jacobean Revival style, brick and terra cotta Stamey Hotel for a group of Hutchinson investors known as the Stamey Hotel Company or the Fifth Avenue Building Corporation. Hulse was a director of the corporation. The other personal project that Hulse designed is the remodeling and additions to the Brown Home, the only known example of residential architecture that he produced. He named the project the Pactola Apartments. Family legend says that he became aware of the word pactola, which is a french term meaning hidden river, while on a trip to North Dakota.





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Known Public Buildings Designed by W.E. Hulse

- \*Barton County Courthouse, Great Bend, 1917-1918
- Brown County Courthouse, Hiawatha, 1925-1926
- \*Kiowa County, Greensburg, 1913-1914
- \*Osage County Courthouse, Lyndon, 1922-1923
- \*Pawnee County Courthouse, Larned, 1918-1919
- Pottawatomie County Courthouse, Westmoreland, 1884
- \*Reno County Courthouse, Hutchinson, 1929-1931
- Wallace County Courthouse, Sharon Springs, 1914-1915
- \*Liberty High School, Hutchinson
- \*Roosevelt School, Hutchinson
- \*Winans School, Hutchinson
- Langdon Rural High School
- \*Buhler High School
- \*Abbyville Rural High School
- \*Stamey Hotel, Hutchinson
- \*Hotel, Lawrence
- \*Sylvia High School

\* Indicates that original plans are on file at Dronberger, Arbuckle Walker, McLain & Link Architects & Engineers, 1020 N. Main, Hutchinson, KS 67501.  
Phone 316-663-5421



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Sheridan Ploughe, History of Reno County Kansas, B.F. Bowden & Co., Indianapolis, Indiana, 1917.

Biographical History of Central Kansas, Vol. I, The Lewis Publishing Co., N.Y. & Chicago, 1902.

Mitchell Files.

Julie A. Wortman & David P. Johnson, Legacies: Kansas' Older County Courthouses, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas, 1981.

Oral interviews conducted by Linda Laird in April, 1989 with Mrs. Grant Wagoner (daughter of architect W.E. Hulse), Virginia Fesler.